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260179 SS

HUOIO

Bowles
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Letter from Donald Payne about Charlie

Bussey (hero during the Korean War)

TG 2B / J Podesta

we need to check

Thru out

BK

THE PP

4-3-98

Mr President

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

4-3-48

In 1948 Pres Truman integrated
the Armed Services - It didn't happen until
1950 but he did his Executive Order in 1948
I think we should celebrate 50 yrs this
year and I'd like to talk to you about
Charlie Bussey, who should be recognized
for his heroism during the Korean War
He should have received the Congressional
Metal of Honor -

I'd like to follow up with your
staff

Thanks

Donald Payne

White House Medical Unit Post-Travel Advisory

Reminders:

1. **CONTINUE YOUR ANTI-MALARIA MEDICATION** as prescribed upon your return to the United States:

Lariam--continue to take weekly for 4 more weeks

Doxycycline--continue to take DAILY for 4 more weeks

2. Symptoms of Malaria:

Getting malaria makes you feel like you have the flu--*only worse*. Before an attack of malaria begins, you may have one or two days of "not feeling well" and during this time notice headache, fatigue, loss of appetite, and a low-grade fever. The acute attack starts abruptly with chills (the cold stage), soon followed by a high fever (the hot stage) lasting 2 - 6 hours. During this time you may also notice pains in your chest, stomach, joints and muscles. The attack ends with 2 -3 hours of heavy sweating. If you are not treated promptly, symptoms will recur and complications may develop (even death), especially if the attack is caused *P. falciparum*.

NOTE: Malaria can occur as soon as seven days after an infective bite, and almost all cases occur WITHIN 30 DAYS after an infective bite in people not taking an anti-malarial medication.

If you develop the symptoms described above, *see your physician immediately!*

Is this America's greatest soldier?
Then why isn't he wearing
the Medal of Honor?



**CAPTAIN
COMBAT**

Registered WGA

By John B Holway

**THE THREE WARS
OF CHARLIE BUSSEY**

Bussey fought racism in America,
Fascism in Europe,
And Commnism in Korea.

KOREA, JULY 23 1950

On a sweltering afternoon in the Korean mountain town of Yechon, Captain Charles M Bussey may have performed the greatest feat of individual arms since the Roman hero, Horatio, stood on a bridge and single-handedly slew an Etruscan army.

With two machine guns and three enlisted men, Bussey reportedly mowed down 258 North Korean attackers threatening to cut off his men from the rear.

Bussey's unit, the all-black 24th Infantry regiment (25th Division) took Yechon to score the first major U.S. victory in the war following weeks of unrelieved defeats. It made headlines in U.S. papers and was hailed by a resolution in Congress.

Bussey's feat is unparalleled in U.S. military annals.

* In World War I Sergeant Alvin York killed or captured 133 enemy soldiers.

* In the Battle of the Bulge, Sgt Jose Lopez killed about 100 enemy with a machine gun.

* In Italy Lt Audie Murphy killed about 50 enemy single-handedly.

All three won the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Bussey was denied a CMH because, his commanding officer said, he was black.



THE ARMY AIR FORCE

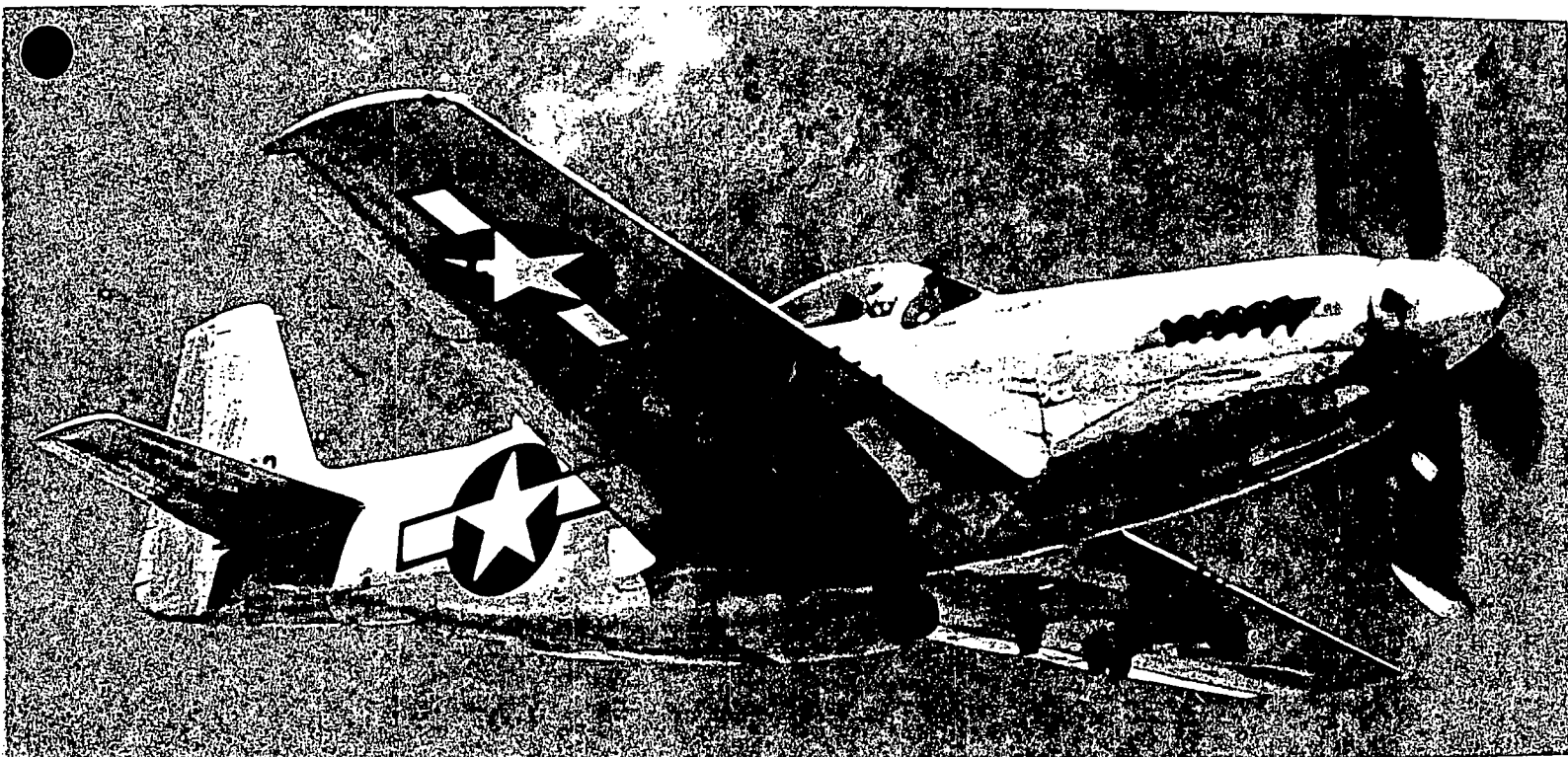
We took advanced training at Selfridge Field, Michigan. We had a post commander whose job was not to give us training but to see that we didn't use the Officers' Club or swimming pool.

When we got to Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia, our embarkation point, the whole camp was just riddled with signs: "Whites Only." Directly across the street from our area there was a movie that said "White Troops Only," and the PX said "White Troops Only." The nearest PX for Negroes was quite a ways away.

I got a belly full of it. I just said, "The hell with this crap. I'll raise some troops, and we'll all go to the movie." When the troops showed up, I pulled the sign off the building, and we all bought tickets.

When we left the movie, a few fistfights broke out between the black and white soldiers. Later on, however, it got more serious. They had issued us guns and ammunition that day, and the guys started firing at random up in the air and caused quite a bit of consternation.

The next day they came through the area taking all the signs down.



P-51 Mustang

THE RED TAILS

In Italy we became totally and completely dedicated to protecting bombers. We flew 15,000 sorties, and we never lost a bomber to enemy fighters. No other fighter group in the world can claim that. Nobody! I'm very proud to have been there.

On one mission I was with a formation of four ships, and I saw a flight of German aircraft, maybe five or six, flying in a continuous vertical loop. Every time one got his nose pointed up, a bomber blew up right in front of him. We just nuzzled right into their flight, and every time one of them got his nose up, we blew him out of the sky.

On the way home, somewhere in the Swiss Alps, I saw a German ship and got on him and put a couple of bursts into him. He started to dive, and I followed him, firing every time I was in range and in line. He finally hit the field and blew.

THE ARMY ENGINEERS

When the war was over, I left the Service to go back to school, but when I finished, jobs were impossible to find, so I went back to the Service. I had joined the Army National Guard, so I ended up in the Army Engineers.

In March 1950 I was in Japan as commanding officer of the all-black 77th engineer combat company, in the black 24th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Division. That was two years after President Truman signed the order supposedly integrating the Armed Forces, but there had been practically no integration in the Army. I was in Jim Crow outfits as late as 1956.

I was young and had a lot of energy, and we were by far the most outstanding engineer outfit in this country, if not in the world. At one time we were the most decorated unit in the Korean war.

On the 25th of June war broke out in Korea; on the 10th of July my unit was sent over.



Time magazine printed the following report:

"U.S. Negro troops last week scored the first sizeable American ground victory of the Korean war, and incidentally provided an answer to the Communist charge that Americans were warring against the 'colored' races of Asia....

"The Negro GIs moved out under a barrage of mortar and artillery fire in the afternoon. They advanced steadily throughout the night, finally entered the burning town at dawn the next day."

FINAL

WTOH AM (1500) PM (96.3)

WASHINGTON: SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1960

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By John G. Norris
Pastor

All Guard forces now slated for mobilization are "supporting" combat and service forces not a part of the 27 militia divisions. The reserve groups undoubtedly will come solely from among the 834 "Class A" units, officials said.

Both groups also rushed legislation to the floor to remove the present 2,005,882 manpower ceiling on the armed forces. Pentagon officials indicated that plans call for putting another 600,000 and 700,000 men in uniform by next June 30—raising the total perhaps well above 2,100,000.

Senator Warren G. Magnuson (D., Wash.), who brought up the bill, said it would "help clean out subversive elements on the waterfront" as well as permit strict policing of ports and foreign vessels. The measure, which now goes to the House, would permit existing standards by powers to be put into effect without declaring a national emergency.

An Army spokesman said the National Guard divisions are not



... FOR JOB—Men of the Fifth Marines were busy packing equipment at their armory at 3d and C sts. n.w. as the Reservists received word they had 10 days to get ready to go into active service. Corp. Morgan S. Cassman (foreground) and Sgt. Eugene R. Callahan start packing machine guns.

Officers and men of Washington's Fifth Infantry Battalion, Maryland. By Homer Bigart. KTHH News Service.

The notices were going out from the Fifth's armory at 3d and C sts. n.w., where the outfit's new commanding officer, Maj. David F. Gordon, spent his first day of command. "It was humiliating because, first, Taelon was a strategic prize and now missing Gen. William Dean, United States Twenty-fourth Infantry, was a strategic prize."

BULLETIN

A communique said South Korean troops on the American east flank also dropped back under attack from the Second North Korean Division.

MacArthur reported American and South Korean troops on the western front had completed a "planned withdrawal to better lines of natural defense."

Tokyo (Saturday), July 2
(AP)—Fresh United States
troops in two separate assaults
have seized two Communist
held communication centers
on the Korean front, official
announcements said today.

United States troops under cover of a fierce naval bombardment Friday captured the ruined east coast city of Yongdok, a navy spokesman said.

Yongdok is 25 miles north of Seoul where the United States First Cavalry Division landed earlier this week in the first amphibious operation of the war.

United States Negro troops the Twenty-fifth Infantry Division also undergoing a baptism of fire seized the rail and highway city of Yechon on the same day, a dispatch said. Yechon is 60 miles northeast of the fallen nation of Taejon.

Reported Destroyed

Yongdok, the east coast communication hub, was reported "destroyed" by fire from a British cruiser and a United States cruiser on Wednesday. It is located 20 miles north of the big United States supply port of Pusan.

A Navy communique said the important east coast town was taken after a ground attack by American and South Korean forces which began at 5:45 a. m., Korea Daylight Time.

Naval units which had destroyed Yongdok by gunfire the previous day maintained a steady and barrage 1000 yards ahead of the advancing troops.

Yechon Recaptured by Yanks

cruiser at dawn signalled the start of the ground advance. Shore observers directed naval gunfire as it stepped up the coast in advance of the infantrymen.

Shore observers reported that machineguns and North Korean troops were "completely stopped by the naval gunfire," the communique said.

Naval units had maintained intense bombardment of the Yongdok area for a week preceding the ground assault.

The communique said headquarters of the Twenty-fifth Division Artillery had messaged Admiral Higgins that "naval activity along this coast is believed responsible for stopping full scale offensive."

American cruiser fire, Thursday destroyed a radio station just north of Yongdok and "by actual count of a shore observer" killed 40 North Koreans. The cruiser fired 38 rounds.

The battered Twenty-fourth Division, which had been absorbing the overpowering shock of North Korean tanks and foot soldiers in great numbers since July 5, dug into hill positions southeast of Taejon.

Unreported since abandonment of Taejon was the Twenty-fourth's commander, Maj. Gen. William F. Dean.

The Twenty-fourth gave up the blazing rail city Thursday midnight after exacting a heavy price in enemy tanks with new 3.5-inch bazooka rocket launchers. At least a dozen tanks—some disguised with American markings for sneak attacks—were knocked out in the planned getaway to prepared positions four miles and more below Taejon on the rail and highway line of supply up from Pusan.

The Twenty-fourth expected the North Koreans to exploit their capture of Taejon with a quick followup down the railway and roads, but the enemy did not come on in force after harassing the American escape with roadblock crossfire.

Losses of tanks and the prospect of losing more may account for the North Korean delay.

Enemy patrols were reported trying to get behind the new United States hill positions and artillery, but the Army put out mysterious hints that it has new means of coping with infiltration tactics.

The Negroes' 16-hour battle ended after dawn Friday. United States' casualties were reported light. Enemy losses could not be estimated.

Yechon had changed hands sev-

eral times in the Communist effort to drive through South Korean troops to cut the communications line behind the Twenty-fourth's shock absorber forces around Taejon.

The pullback from Taejon and the deployment of the Twenty-fifth and the mechanized First Cavalry somewhere on the eastern end of the line apparently are establishing the pattern for the hold-on campaign in southeast Korea.

That will be the staging area for counter offensives and part of the aerial attrition campaign against the North Koreans while that counter offensive power is laboriously built up.

Yechon is cupped in a mountain pass. Two Negro companies used a flanking move—a favorite Red tactic—under cover of artillery and mortar fire while others logged it across rice paddies and stalked among the houses, firing as they went. The battle went on overnight.

The 24th Division southeast of Taejon was reported dug in on positions favorable to artillery defense in hills above the rice fields and blocking the way of the Red army advance. The North Koreans have shown reluctance to step ahead without their armor and now it is reduced under the new bazooka attacks.

Headquarters of the Eighth Army commander, Lieut. Gen. Walton H. Walker, said anti-infiltration tactics have been devised and they were working. Details were not disclosed.

Walker was reported to be "unable to conceal his pleasure with the results achieved."

Munitions Chiefs Of U. S., Canada To Discuss Output

Ottawa, July 21 (AP).—Top munitions experts from Canada and the United States will meet here August 8 to consider a joint economic effort to produce munitions and supplies in the event of a third world war, it was learned today.

These officials include Harry J. Carmichael and Sydney D. Pierce on the Canadian side and W. Stuart Symington and Hubert E. Howard on the American. They are expected to prepare recommendations to both countries on means of harnessing the economies of the two nations to produce war equipment.

the induction or registration limit of 26.

Cd. Harland C. Parks, director of personnel planning for the Force, said the USAF may have asked Congress for authority to some of its World War II plans if enough qualified personnel cannot be obtained from the current and calling reserves.

May Change Service

At present all for GI had 90 days service before V or one year after the shooting are exempt. Officials said that a change here is asked, it is simply changing the limits of a blanket lifting of the exemption under present plans.

Byers said legislation proposed will be asked soon for some act changes, but indicated it would be minor. One proposal is elimination of the exemption of Guardmen and Reservists who enlisted before they were 18.

An Army spokesman said the type of Guard and Reserve now slated for call largely are supporting forces needed for a war in the rear areas of Korea. That an offensive can be launched and the special combat companies and battalions which are attached to divisions at the front.

They include tank battalions, anti-aircraft, so-called "combat artillery" (heavy units), combat engineers, railroad, port and warehouse units, laundry and "de-lousing" companies, etc.

He said all units will be given some additional training, "beefed" up to war-strength transfers of either trainees or recruits before going overseas. All units called will be given 30 days' notice before having to port.

Text of the Army announcement:

"The Department of the Army in the process of preparing calling non-divisional elements both National Guard and Reserve to active duty as the need and facilities for their training can be provided. The immediate present it is contemplated that units of a division will be called. They will be alerted approximately prior to movement so as to members thereof time to their personal affairs."

"In the meantime, the Army is asking for immediate voluntary active service of individuals and men in certain grades and skills. These individuals will be given up to 30 days to return to their homes."

The bill "freezing" military service will permit the Army to extend all enlistments

22

Taejon Held Worst Defeat of War

FIREFIGHT AT YECHON

On July 23 one of my platoons was supporting an infantry battalion in Yechon, when we received our first mail, I took it to my platoon, just my driver and I -- I had no idea the country was as hostile as it was, or I wouldn't have been out there by myself.

There was a big firefight going on in the village. Some troops who had been left as rear guard told me my platoon was spear-heading the attack, which made me unhappy, because engineers weren't supposed to "spearhead" the infantry.

I climbed a hill, and below me was a series of rice paddies which ran the length of a small valley. I saw a column of about 200-300 men three-quarters of a mile away, coming out of a defilade arroyo, dressed in white like Korean farmers. I didn't know whether they were farmers or soldiers, but they moved like soldiers. It looked like they were heading for a narrow levee. I could have gotten in my jeep and driven away, but if they cut the levee, there would be no getting out for our troops.

I went back down the hill and pressed into service three enlisted men from the rear guard and placed two machine guns on the hill. I put two men on the .30-calibre water-cooled light machine gun; I had an air-cooled .50 calibre heavy machine gun, and I got one man to feed me ammunition.

I let the column move in close and put a burst over their heads. Then someone blew a whistle, and things started happening! They started to move toward my hill, and suddenly I wished I wasn't there. I was scared shitless, absolutely shitless! I had no business facing that many people, whether out of stupidity, or any other reason. I kept thinking, "God damn it! Why didn't you mind your own business!" I didn't think I was going to get out of that thing. But there was no place to run to and nothing to do except fight.

I had a tremendous advantage by virtue of being up on a hill, and I had fairly good cover, while they were down in a rice paddy with almost no protection. But they had a mortar behind them, and it put several bursts on us. I got hit early with a fragment in my wrist and another in my cheek. They bled a little, but a small wound was just not important at that time.

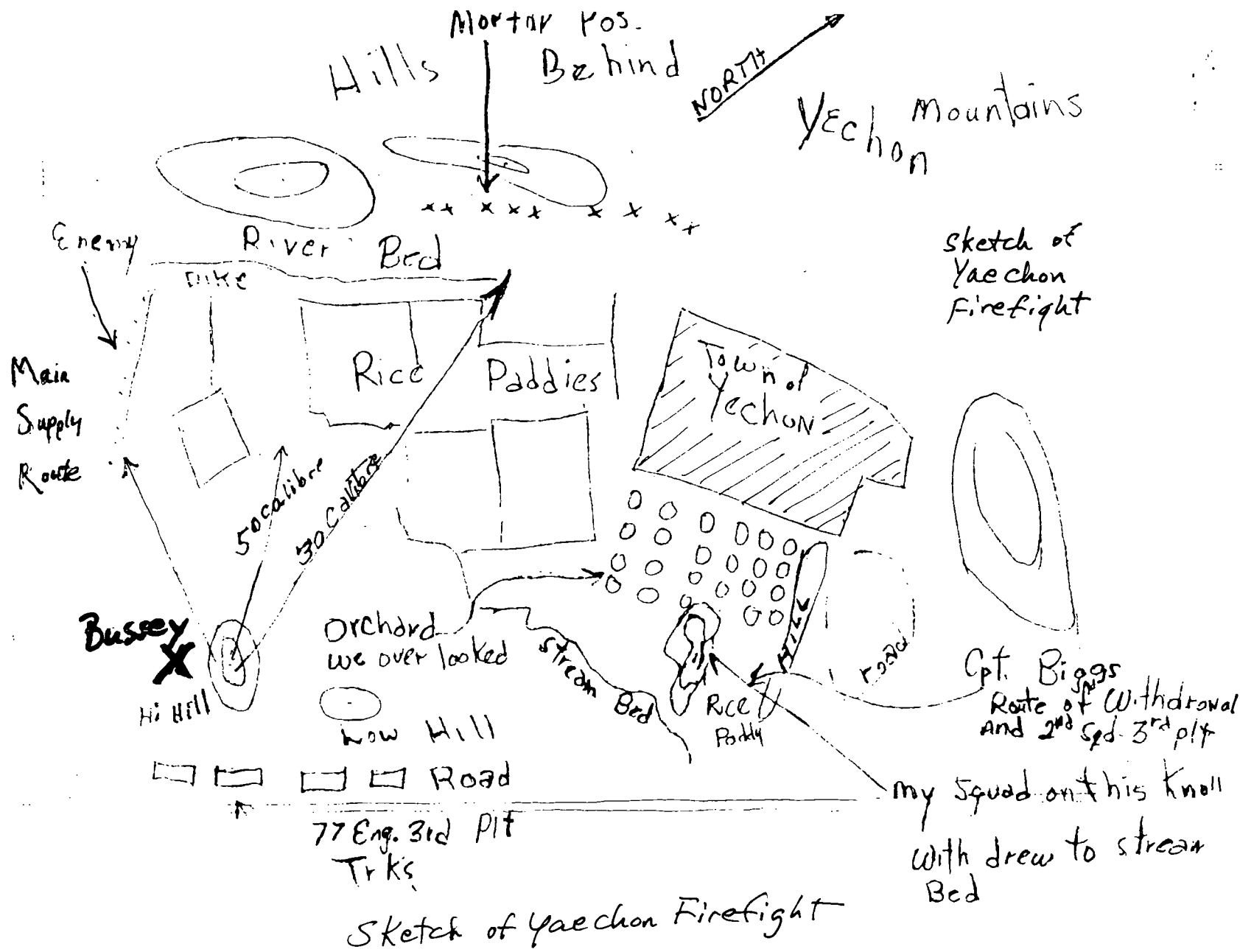
The mortar also killed one of my kids on the .30 and wounded the other. My big gun got hot and stopped firing. That's when I was in real trouble. I didn't think the .30 could do the job, but there was no other way, so I went down and manned the .30 and kept the fire up.

It's very difficult to estimate time in a firefight. Time is out of perspective with reality. It must have been seven to ten minutes, but it seemed very prolonged, because things were happening so fast.

I shot them up pretty effectively and continued to fire until they were all still. I took troops down, and we made a body count -- 258 bodies. It was a grisly business.

"Thou shalt not kill." That troubled me at the time. It's still not a thing I have fully resolved. I wasn't convinced that this method of resolving conflict was right. I still am not.

The 25th Division commander, General Kean, came up to our bivouac and passed out some ribbons and told me the Division was going to recommend me for the Congressional Medal of Honor. He said as soon as the paperwork was in, he'd forward it.



Bussey returned the next day with a bulldozer, scooped out a mass grave, and covered the bodies. The scene was photographed by Sgt Alfonzo Spencer.



The mass grave at Yechon. A. Spencer/77th ECC

1
2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

3 COUNTY OF Santa Clara

ss.

4 I, LAVAUGHN E. FIELDS, am a retired First Sergeant (E-8) in
5 the United States Army.

6 On or about July 20, 1950, I was serving as a corporal and
7 squad leader assigned to the 3rd Platoon, 77th Engineer Combat
8 Company, 25th Infantry Division, Korean Combat Zone. I reported
9 to Sergeant First Class Collins A. Whittaker, platoon sergeant
10 and 2nd Lieutenant Chester J. Lenon, platoon leader.

11 Lt. Lenon briefed us concerning our mission. We were to
12 take two villages outside of Yechon and then assist the 3rd
13 Battalion, 24th U.S. Infantry Regiment, in taking Yechon itself.
14 We encountered little, if any, resistance in taking the two
15 villages. But we subsequently encountered heavy resistance in
16 attempting to take Yechon.

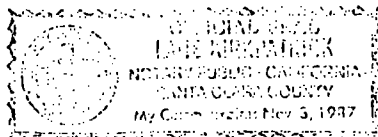
17 During the latter engagement, while temporarily occupying a
18 high knoll overlooking an orchard and some portions of Yechon and
19 while awaiting orders to continue advancing my squad, I heard a
20 heavy machine gun open fire to my left. I looked toward the
21 sound of firing and observed what I took to be enemy soldiers,
22 dressed in white, coming under fire from the machine gun. The
23 enemy soldiers were scattering for cover. To my far left enemy
24 soldiers were moving toward the road some 500 yards to our rear.
25 The machine gunner picked them up and began firing on them. I
26 saw some 10 to 15 enemy fall to the ground. The gunner was our
27 engineer company commander, 1st Lieutenant Charles M. Bussey.
28

1 Lieutenant Bussey was still firing when the enemy opened
2 fire on his position with mortars. At this time we ourselves
3 came under intense mortar fire. One of my men, Private First
4 Class Curtis Donald Womack, was wounded in the head.

5 We did not advance further. My squad continued in action
6 until I was ordered to disengage by Captain Biggs, commanding
7 officer, L Company, 24th Infantry.

8
9
10 
LAVAUGHN E. FIELDS

11 Subscribed and sworn to before me on June 25, 1984,
12 1984.



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18 Notary Public
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1
2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)

) ss.

3 COUNTY OF SAN MATEO)

4
5 I, ROSCOE DUDLEY, am a retired First Sergeant (E-8) in the
6 United States Army.

7 I was the first sergeant, 77th Engineer Combat Company, 25th
8 Infantry Division, during the period that First Lieutenant and
9 then Captain Charles M. Bussey served as commanding officer.
10 Although I was not a participant in nor an eye-witness to the
11 battle of Yechon, Korea on or about July 20, 1950, I learned of
12 Lieutenant Bussey's actions through a number of interviews I
13 conducted with soldiers in the company who participated in the
14 battle.

15 I am informed and believe that Lieutenant Bussey came on the
16 scene of the battle after the fight was already in progress. He
17 observed a large number of enemy soldiers attempting to outflank
18 the assaulting reinforced 3rd Battalion, 24th U.S. Infantry
19 Regiment. He subsequently manned a .50 caliber machine gun and
20 commanded the firing of a nearby .30 caliber machine gun.
21 Approximately 258 North Koreans were killed. Enemy mortar fire
22 killed one .30 caliber machine gunner and wounded another.

23 Lieutenant Bussey came to the aid of the reinforced infantry
24 battalion, at the risk of his own life, with an overwhelmingly
25 successful result. I am convinced that Lieutenant Bussey's
26 actions warrant the award of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

27 I personally prepared a recommendation that the
28 Congressional Medal of Honor be awarded to Lieutenant Bussey. I

1 preparing this recommendation, I interviewed Lieutenant Bussey
2 jeep driver, Private First Class Albert Neal, and the platoon
3 sergeant, Sergeant First Class Collins A. Whittaker. Private
4 Neal was an eyewitness to the incident. I also interviewed
5 several other soldiers who were eyewitnesses, but I no longer
6 recall the names of those individuals.

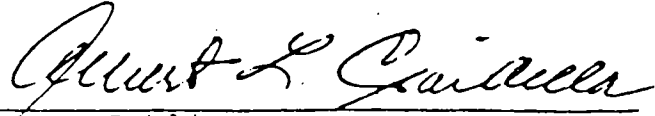
7 I was assisted in preparing the recommendation by Corporal
8 Harvey, the company clerk. Two maps were prepared by Master
9 Sergeant Elliott Green. The original recommendation included m
10 narrative description of the event, maps and eyewitnesses'
11 statements and was delivered by company messenger within 10 day
12 following the actual battle. The packet was submitted to
13 Headquarters, 24th U.S. Infantry Regiment.

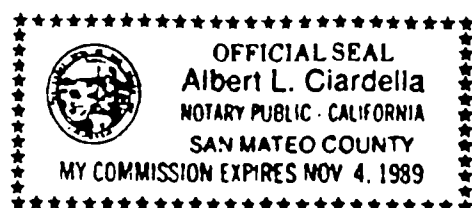
14 I remember having the impression that higher commanders we:
15 concurring in my original recommendation. I do not recall being
16 present during a subsequent award ceremony involving Major
17 General William B. Kean.

18
19
20 
ROScoe DUDLEY

21 Subscribed and sworn to before me on July 15, 1986.

22 ~~1984~~.

23
24 
Notary Public



THE LIVING TOMB

One week later, on the 30th of July, we were bivouacked in a school. I had been issued about 10,000 anti-personnel mines, and I stupidly piled them up into a small mountain in the school yard. Right at midnight artillery started coming in. I started yelling and getting the troops out of the building. When the last man had gotten out, just as I went through the gate, a round blew up the mines and blew a 12-foot mud and rock wall over on top of me. It was my tomb.

My head was under three or four feet of rubble, but I could breathe. I was in a sitting position, with my head bent over, and some rocks were pinching me. I exhausted myself trying to get out, but the weight of the rubble was too much. I had to sit there completely penned in all day. It was the most devastating experience of my life.

I was cold. I was hungry. Never in my life have I been so thirsty. An insect crawled into my inner ear; it felt as big as a turtle, but I was powerless to scratch. My eyes and nose were filled with dust. I was hours overdue for urination. I ached in every fiber. I lost consciousness.

When I came to, my sphincter had failed. One thigh, hand, and arm were wet, and it felt as if 10,000 ants were crawling over them. I recited the 91st Psalm, and the 23rd: "The Lord is my shepherd." I had a lot of religious -- and blasphemous -- thoughts. "Why me, Lord?" And a towering voice chilled me: "Why not you? Why not you?"

At about 4:30 in the afternoon, the sun warmed the rubble, and I began to hear artillery in the distance and even small arms fire. Finally, I could hear speech very faintly. I yelled and a voice said, "Heh, it sounds like one of the mothafuckas is under that stuff" -- that's when I knew they weren't North Koreans -- "take that rubble off, and I'll shoot him." They dug down to my helmet, and I heard someone yell, "Heh, this is a captain!"

They pulled me out and stretched me on the ground. Few men have ever come back from their tombs, but by five or six o'clock I was ready to go again. There was work to be done. My faith was restored, and I had a reunion with God.

But for 15 or 20 years, any time I was on my back, almost asleep, I felt millions of oriental soldiers double-timing over my grave, until I'd wake up in the middle of the night screaming.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Ten days later Bussey learned that eight of his men, led by Lt Chet Lenon, now of Alexandria VA, had been trapped 20 miles behind enemy lines. One man crawled back to friendly lines and reported three were dead and five wounded and without food or water.

I asked regiment for permission to go get these people. They said, "Hell, no, you can't do that, there are too many enemy."

But I asked for volunteers, and every man in the company raised his hand. I chose 150 and set out in jeeps. I knew I was sticking my neck out a mile.

After seven or eight hours marching in the August heat, we began to smell the odor of dead bodies decomposing and found the survivors. We gave them chocolate bars, dressed their wounds, buried the dead, put the survivors on stretchers, and began the trip back. Colonel Roberts was pacing up and down in front of the company command post.

"Did you lose any men?" he barked.

"No sir."

"Did you find Lieutenant Lenon?"

"Right here, sir," Lenon replied.

"Good," Roberts said, and walked away.

Both Bussey and Lenon were put in for the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest medal. Lenon eventually received a Silver Star. Bussey got a Bronze Star.

THE MEDAL OF HONOR

Three different battalion commanders sat on my Medal of Honor. Months went by, and finally, the last commander, John Corley, told me, "Well, I thought I should downgrade this thing" to a Silver Star, the Army's third highest medal. He changed "258" enemy killed to "numerous" enemy. He was a West Pointer and a drinking 'friend' of mine, so I asked him why.

He said, "I belong to a group who believe it's our responsibility to keep Negroes in their place, and the most effective way is to deny them leadership. Then there's never any threat to anyone. If the medal was posthumous, no problem. Or if you were an inarticulate enlisted man, I would have no objection. But being who you are, you'd be out encouraging Negroes to do the things you do." Without leadership, Negroes were harmless, he said, but with leaders they could be a threat of some kind. "Our country can't afford this, and that's my considered opinion."

HEADQUARTERS 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 25

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 324

12 November 1950

AWARD OF THE SILVER STAR. - By direction of the President, under the provisions of the Act of Congress approved 9 July 1918 (WD Bul 43 1918) and pursuant to authority in AR 600-45, the Silver Star for gallantry in action is awarded to the following named officers:

Captain (then First Lieutenant) CHARLES M. BUSSEY, O8C4548, Corps of Engineers, 77th Engineer Combat Company, United States Army. Observing that a rifle company in a small village near Iechon, Korea was being subjected to severe mortar and machine gun fire from enemy forces occupying high ground nearby, Captain Bussey maneuvered a squad equipped with two 50 calibre machine guns to command position and manning one of the machine guns, directed withering fire on the enemy position. When friendly heavy mortars registered on the enemy position and the enemy soldiers attempted to flee, Captain Bussey destroyed them with the intense fire of his company. By his conspicuous courage and outstanding leadership, Captain Bussey was instrumental in the destruction of numerous enemy and the relief of a beleaguered unit. His courageous actions are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. Entered the military service from California.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL KEAN:

OFFICER:

JOHN W. CHILDS
Colonel, GSC
Chief of Staff

/s/ G. W. MASTER
G. W. MASTER
Lt Colonel, AGC
Adjutant General

A TRUE COPY

Paul D. Wells

PAUL D. WELLS
1st Lt, Infantry
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THE ARMY'S ACCOUNT

For almost 50 years Captain David Carlisle (West Point 1950) has prodded the Army to reopen Bussey's case. Several witnesses have died, some only weeks before investigators arrived. But Carlisle tracked down three witnesses:

* Sgt Lavaugn Fields, now in San Jose CA, signed an affidavit placing Bussey on the hill and firing his machine guns.

* First sergeant Roscoe Dudley, since deceased, interviewed other eye-witnesses, typed the Medal of Honor recommendation, and forwarded it to battalion headquarters. That paperwork has been destroyed or disappeared.

* Sgt Alfonzo Spencer, now living in Capital Heights, MD, identified a photo of bodies lined up while Korean civilians looked on as the one he had taken, "or one just like it."

Investigators accompanied Bussey to Yechon, where he pointed out old landmarks, but they found no mass grave. Charlie says it has been paved over for a factory parking lot.

He was told, "No bodies, no Medal."

The Army's official history, From the Naktong to the Yalu, by Roy Appleman, didn't mention Bussey at all. The Yechon operation was dismissed with a quote from a white colonel who arrived the next day and said he saw no evidence of a battle.

African-Americans protested this and other allegedly biased accounts. At last the Army agreed to put out a new history, by three white historians, Black Soldiers, White Army. But black historians are still unhappy.

The authors placed Bussey on the hill and said machine gun fire was heard from the direction of the hill. It does not mention the official communique from the Far East Command. Nor does it say Bussey had received a Silver Star. And it doesn't quote the eye-witnesses.

The authors told John B Holway (Colonel, infantry, ret.), that Bussey made the story up. They said the photograph was not of Yechon, but of another mass grave, although they didn't know which one. They said it came originally from another unit history, but were unable to find it.

In summary:

There is evidence that Bussey did do what he says.

There is no evidence that he didn't.

Charles Bussey's post-military career included employment as a senior construction engineer in Alaska and Saudi Arabia. For 13 years, he lived in Fairbanks, Alaska, where he taught at a community college and was a general contractor. Today residing in Los Angeles, he spends much of his time writing, teaching part-time in the public school system, and lecturing on the Middle East. He has four children and four grandchildren.



I'm not bitter, but I would have more respect for the American system if there were equity for those who fought and were willing to die for our country. Still I deeply love the U.S. Army, and I am proud to be an American. When I hear our national anthem, I can feel the hair rise on my spine, and goose pimples cover my arms.

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